



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY OF RIGHTS BETWEEN THE GERMAN GYMNASIUM AND THE REALGYM- NASIUM.

NOW THAT the first steps towards the co-ordination of the realgymnasium and the gymnasium are made; now that the faculty of philosophy with all its numerous branches of sciences and languages and also the faculty of medicine are open to those who attended a realgymnasium (privileges which formerly were reserved to pupils of the gymnasium only), it will perhaps be of interest to the American readers to know on what grounds the adherents of the modern system (realgymnasium) demand the same privileges that are granted to the gymnasium from the very beginning of the secondary and high-school systems.

The contest is an old one and, as all struggled for privileges, was, at times, fought with great animosity on both sides. It is, I dare say, owing to the lively interest which our Emperor takes in school matters that the end of the war between the two species of schools is in sight. When the "Realschule," now called realgymnasium, was established (the first seed was planted in the ground by Comenius and the growing tree was fostered by Franke, Samler and Hecker) it had nothing to do with the university. Its pupils, after seven years' instruction, were only allowed to continue their studies in a technical college (called polytechnicums, academies, etc.), but none was allowed to enter the sacred halls of the *universitas litterarum*, where only pupils who had sat nine years on the forms of the gymnasium were admitted.

It was evident that with such a difference in the school years the pupils of the realschule could not rival those of a gymnasium. So two more years were added to the former, it was called "realgymnasium" (the name realschule was preserved by a school of the lower kind containing six classes only);

and then competition for the same rights and privileges began. Step by step the realgymnasium has gained ground and now its position is as firmly established as that of the gymnasium.

Two important victories are gained, two faculties of the university are opened to the realgymnasium; only one more is wanted in order to be equal to its adversaries. It is the right of studying law which the adherents of the realgymnasium demand. This granted, they willingly leave the right to study theology to the pupils of the gymnasium. But why do they claim the right to study law? For those who know the German institutions, the reason is most evident. A jurist with us may get any place he likes; all the high state offices are within his reach, orders and titles pour down upon him in showers. For proof of this let me state that all the state secretaries in Saxony, except one (the secretary of the state for war) are jurists. In Prussia it is nearly the same. The number of judges, lawyers, attorneys and notaries is enormous, and besides the best places in all branches of government are reserved to jurists. There is no banking firm of importance and renown but has a jurist among the board of directors; even the great industrial enterprises avail themselves of the services of a jurist with a fixed salary that by far exceeds the income of non-juristic officials.

It is easily conceivable that the desire to win this important position is most ardent on the side of the reform party, and that it is obstinately fought against by the gymnasium. Let us see, now, if there is any reason to believe that the pupils of the realgymnasium are unable to study the law because wanting the stock of learning which is absolutely requisite to enter into the spirit of the laws. For this purpose we must first examine what means the gymnasium has to prepare the minds of its pupils for this study.

The bases of instruction in this school are the classical languages, Latin and Greek, and besides history and mathematics. All those who know the above named languages, must own that their value, as a means of training the spirit, of forming the mind and of teaching the boys to think logically, is unrivaled.

Those who master these languages have passed through a training of the mind that may be called "spiritual gymnastics," and that enables them to enter into any subject, however deep or learned it may be.

But are the classical languages the only means to lead us to that end? Is the antique world the only one which has produced great statesmen, orators, poets, and artists?

To this we resolutely answer, no. However rich in forms and varied in construction the classical languages may be, in richness of thought the modern languages are not one step inferior to them. Compare the tragedies of Sophocles to those of Shakespeare, and you will not be long in doubt whether you shall give the palm to the *heathen* or to the *Christian* poet, and if you read Molière's comedies after those of Plautus, you will easily observe how far they surpass their model and source in beauty and perfection. And what treasures are hidden in that species of writing which the ancients did not know at all, the novel, etc.; does not our face brighten when we think of Dickens, Thackeray, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Eliot, Bourget, Huysman, Loti, and others? Is there, within all the range of classical lyric poetry, anything that can be compared to Tennyson's "In Memoriam?" We see that there is an *embarras de richesse* as to the means of filling heart and mind with sublime notions concerning everything that touches human life and human destiny on this side and beyond the grave.

I think we need but indicate the treasures which are hidden in modern languages—to enumerate them all would by far exceed the space allotted to me in this periodical—to show of what value they are for the cultivation of the *heart* as well as of the *brain* of our youth. I must claim that in the first point they even surpass the classical languages. Take, for instance, the pearl of all the antique tragedies, Trilogv of Oedipus: King Oedipus, Oedipus in Kolonos and Antigone, what things are shown us here. The murder of a father by his son; the incest between mother and son; the suicide of the most lovely person antique poetry has produced. Is it not shocking to our *Christian* notions, repulsive to our esthetical and moral feelings?

What profit does the *heart* derive from such readings? It is awful the dreadful reign of destiny that pervades all the tragedy; with awe I read it when I was young, with awe I read it, now that I am old. As to the form, of course, I know nothing more sublime than the chorus of this trilogy; nothing, indeed, can be compared to the beauty of its language. But not even the touching instance of filial love given by Antigone can efface the horror of its contents.

But it is not the heart, you will observe, with which the jurist has to work, but the brain, and I perfectly agree. For that purpose the pupil of the realgymnasium has to learn Latin to nearly the same extent as the pupil of the rival school. It is only the Greek which is wanting in the former species of schools—pupils learn English in its place. On the other hand, the study of mathematics in the realgymnasium is far more intensive than in the gymnasiums, and its importance for the cultivation and training of the brain is universally acknowledged. In one branch of science, which is particularly fit to enlighten the mind, to teach us logical thinking, in natural history and physics, chemistry, mineralogy, etc., the realgymnasium is far superior to the gymnasium, which has scarcely any instruction in these branches of science. The importance of natural history is not yet universally known, and yet it is just this science, which dispersed the dark ideas of witchcraft and superstition, which caused the rack, the stake, the Inquisition, and the horrid persecutions for sorcery, those blemishes of Christianity, to disappear. The knowledge of this science I think particularly requisite for a jurist, who in so many cases has to deal with practical life, and who in all lawsuits of this kind is entirely dependent on the judgment of an expert, and can decide nothing of his own knowledge or conviction.

There remains one question: Is the realgymnasium able to give its pupils also an ethical instruction equal to that of a gymnasium? I think it is. If you teach religion according to the true spirit of the New Testament, you will lead your pupils through a course of ethics which surpasses all that can be

taught in other branches of instruction. That the pupil can read the New Testament in Greek, the other only in German, makes not the least difference as to the contents, the kernel of the whole instruction. In works of literature it is quite another thing. Man, after the notions of the ancients as they are expressed in its works of literature, is entirely dependent on a blind fate, called *Moirá*, or on the despotic will of tyrannical, wayward gods that are stained with all human vices and foibles. The masterworks of modern literature, however, are consciously or unconsciously written in a way congenial to our Western feeling; the spirit of Christendom pervades them from beginning to end, knowing no blind fate, no irascible and revengeful god but the voice of God in our own bosom — conscience. “In your own bosom are the stars of your fate,” these words of Schiller’s are the ethical base of our modern drama; in your own heart rises the guilt; the catastrophe is the atonement, the expiation for it. Not the anger of the gods has been assuaged by this catastrophe, but your heart has been purified and humbled, and the eternal, divine order of things has been restored, and has rebuilt what human sin destroyed. Thus we find it in Schiller, Goethe, Lessing, but above all in that “revealer of the heart,” the poet of the conscience, the poet of poets, Shakespeare.

We hasten to the conclusion. The impartial observer must confess that a difference between the value of the instruction got in the gymnasium and realgymnasium no longer exists. If the gymnasium has still more pupils than the rival school; if there are about three times as many gymnasiums in Germany as realgymnasiums; if the gymnasium has the more gifted pupils, the reason is not to be found in the value and amount of knowledge got in either school, but in the privileges which surround the classical school like a rampart. The breach which was made in this wall by the realgymnasium is getting larger and larger; the time cannot be far when the rampart will fall, and then it will be the task of the gymnasium to show that it is a match for its rival. There are already among the teachers of the gymnasium, at least among those who are fully convinced

of the value of their instruction and of their own value as teachers, persons who wish for the entire co-ordination of the two species of schools; for "if the gymnasium," they say, "can exist only in consequence of the privileges granted to it, and not by its own intrinsic value, it is not worthy to exist."

OSCAR THIERGEN.

DRESDEN.